



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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**Supervisor Pat Herrity jointly with Supervisor John Cook  
Board Matter  
July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Curb-to-Curb Safety Ordinance Proposal**

**Background:** In the past two years, there has been a noticeable increase in panhandling on medians and intersections throughout the County. While there are some who panhandle because they need to, many more take advantage of the generosity of our residents through panhandling rings. Investigation into these rings has proven that many panhandlers in our County are coming from outside the County and even outside of the state, attracted by the wealth and generosity of our residents.

The Board has sought to help those panhandlers in need by committing a significant portion of the County budget to providing services for those residents who are down on their luck. The Board has encouraged residents to direct panhandlers to these County resources including shelters, food banks, health and job matching services, instead of giving small amounts of money. It is vitally important that we connect those in need with the right services and disincentivize panhandling.

Although homelessness in the County is shrinking, panhandling by roadways is becoming more and more prevalent. In 2017 alone, the Fairfax County Police department received over 2,100 calls related to panhandling and many more have been received by district offices. These calls detailed traffic issues, concerns about panhandler safety, and fears about a suspicious person at an intersection. As a County we devote significant resources to helping our residents in need and to keeping all our residents safe. Since our last discussion on Panhandling, several other Virginia jurisdictions, including the City of Winchester, Clarke County, and Frederick County have responded to this public safety issue through local ordinances that prohibit any direct engagement with cars “curb to curb” while on medians and intersections. Both those in the restricted area and motorists can be charged under these ordinances. This proposed ordinance would regulate curb to curb. It would not restrict sidewalks in any way. Our youth advertising car washes etc. would not be affected. People would still have the opportunity to exercise their First Amendment rights on sidewalks.

**Motion:** Therefore, Madam Chairman, I move staff prepare a proposed ordinance for curb-to-curb safety, prohibiting any engagement of pedestrians with cars while on medians or intersections to be discussed by the Board at the next Public Safety Committee meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup>. In addition, I would like ask OPA to once again reaffirm the Board’s commitment to helping our neediest residents through resources that help them and their families for the long term, not just for the day as panhandling might and encourage all County residents who are looking for ways to help those in need to pass along our County hotline number and contribute their donations to not for profits that can help those truly in need.

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